

### 13. SIGHTING OF THE WHITETAILED LAPWING *VANELLUS LEUCURUS* (LICHTENSTEIN) IN THRISSUR DISTRICT, KERALA

During frequent visits to Enamavu Kole wetlands of Thrissur district, Kerala, N.K. Sathyan and I had an opportunity to observe an adult whitetailed lapwing *Vanellus leucurus*, a species vagrant to South India. The bird was seen on December 5, 6, 8, 14 and 25, 1998.

The adult *Vanellus leucurus* was more or less the same size as yellow wattled lapwing *Vanellus malabaricus*. The upperparts including head (except for the pale forehead and throat) were uniformly muddy brown. The breast was a little brown-tinged grey, or clear grey. Rest of underparts were white. Some narrow black and white bands were seen along the edge of the closed wings. The closed wing tips and bill were black. During early sightings, the long legs were bright orange-yellow, but later they became clear yellow. The dark eyes were very prominent on the pale face. In flight, pure white tail, broad white wing band and black primaries confirmed

our identification. The under primaries were black and rest of underwing was white. The bird kept to the margins of the wetland. The feeding style was like that of other lapwings.

According to Ali and Ripley (1987) there is no record of this species from the extreme south of the Indian peninsula except Mysore. Baker and Inglis (1930) stated, "a winter visitor according to Stuart Baker, straggling as far south as Mysore." Sálím Ali (1969) and Neelakantan *et al.* (1993) did not include the whitetailed lapwing as they did not come across it anywhere during their survey of Kerala. Therefore, this new record from Kerala can also be considered a southern range extension of the species in South India.

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### 14. NEW SITE RECORD OF THE INDIAN GREAT BLACK WOODPECKER *DRYOCOPUS JAVENSIS* (HORSFIELD) FROM ANDHRA PRADESH

The Indian great black woodpecker *Dryocopus javensis* (Horsfield) is a local resident species distributed along the Western Ghats, from Surat Dangs to the hills of Tamil Nadu (Ali and Ripley 1987). It is also reported from Bastar (Ali, 1951), Jyothimamidi (Ripley *et al.*, 1988) and Udanti (Bharos, 1992). Bharos (1992) opined that the sightings of this species are probably under the influence of climatic conditions and local movements.

We report sightings of the Indian great

black woodpecker from Kawal Wildlife Sanctuary (c. 19° 5' to 19° 20' N & 78° 32' to 79° 12' E), Adilabad district, Andhra Pradesh. The senior author first sighted an individual busily drumming on a teak trunk, in the teak *Tectona grandis* dominated mixed forest near Rampur on February 16, 1997. Subsequently, the species was sighted twice (February 28, 1998, September 26, 1998) from the same area. The literature does not report this species from the Telengana region of Andhra Pradesh. However, it may occur

sporadically between the Eastern Ghats and Satpura Hills. March 27, 1999

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15. TREE PIE (*DENDROCITTA VAGABUNDA*) IN THE ARID THAR DESERT

In January 1998, while studying the Houbara bustard *Chlamydotis undulata* in the Thar desert of Rajasthan, we visited Dhanana, about 110 km west of Jaisalmer city. Dhanana is an extremely arid area with sand dunes all around. Large trees, except for a few khejri *Prosopis cineraria* trees, are absent. Beyond this village there is no human habitation, as it is close to the international border. There was a small Border Out Post (BOP) of the Border Security Force, atop a large sand dune. In the BOP area, there were three neem trees (*Azadirachta indica*). We reached Dhanana at about 1330 hrs, the temperature was about 36 °C. We were surprised to see a tree pie *Dendrocitta vagabunda* on one of the neem trees. This bird has not been reported here earlier.

The tree pie is usually found in forest plantations, secondary jungle, cultivation, human

habitation, and gardens (Ali and Ripley 1983). Owing to the development of the Indira Gandhi Nahar Project and agriculture in the Thar desert, tremendous changes are taking place in the avifaunal composition of the Thar (Rahmani 1997). New forest birds can now be seen in the plantations developed on either side of the canal. However, Dhanana is located at least 150 km from the nearest canal plantation. Therefore, its presence in this extremely arid region is worth recording.

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